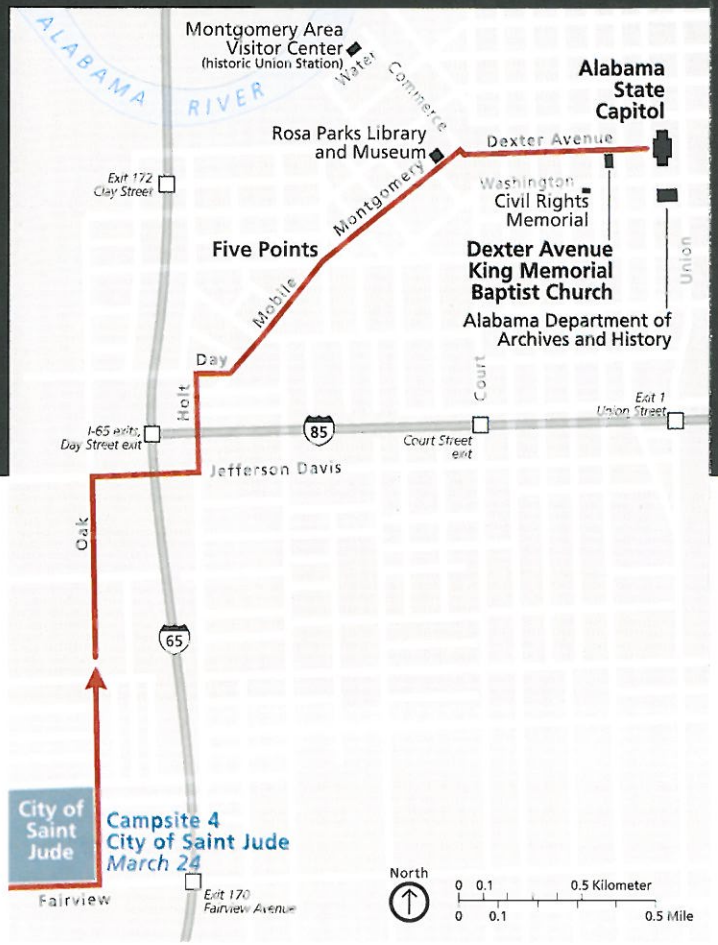
Montgomery



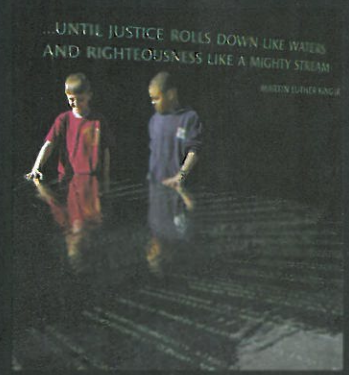
The last leg of the march, from City of Saint Jude to the Alabama State Capitol, is almost five miles long on busy city streets. If you wish to follow the marchers' route in Montgomery, we recommend that you drive it.

March 21–25, 1965
Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March

U.S. 80 has been designated a National Scenic Byway, Alabama State Scenic Highway, and All-American Road. The Alabama Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration donated funds for this brochure and the Lowndes Interpretive Center. The Center, built on the site of Tent City, is open from 9 am to 4:30 pm daily.

The Alabama State Capitol was the marchers' goal and site of the rally of 25,000 people. Just steps from the crowd was the spot where Jefferson Davis had been sworn in as president of the Confederacy a century earlier.

Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church is an icon of the civil rights movement.



At the Civil Rights Memorial, water flows over the names of those slain in the civil rights struggle.

Montgomery: Resistance and Change

Alabama State Capitol In the emotional aftermath of the shooting death of Jimmie Lee Jackson by an Alabama state trooper, some suggested protesting to Gov. George Wallace by carrying Jackson's body to the steps of the capitol building. Organizers decided instead to stage a memorial march from Selma to Montgomery. When the marchers reached the capitol, state troopers barred them from the steps, so SCLC's Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., SNCC's John Lewis, and other speakers stood on a flatbed truck in front of the capitol to address the crowd. Governor Wallace refused to receive a voting rights petition from a delegation led by Dr. King.

City of Saint Jude In the 1930s the Catholic Church established in Montgomery a nondiscriminatory religious, health, and educational complex that was far ahead of its time in the segregated South. It offered 36 acres for the last encampment of the march. The "Stars for Freedom" rally, organized by Harry Belafonte, included Sammy Davis, Jr.; Sidney Poitier; Joan Baez; Mahalia Jackson; Peter, Paul, and Mary; and many others.

Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church This church, known then as Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, was a block from the Alabama State Capitol and the staging area for the rally in Montgomery at the end of the march from Selma. It was already a civil rights landmark: In 1955, when Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was the new pastor of the church, local activists formed the Montgomery Improvement Association in response to the arrest of Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man. They asked Dr. King to head the group, and his church became the headquarters for the successful 1955–56 boycott of the Montgomery bus system.

Related Sites

Alabama Department of Archives and History A photographic exhibit of the march from Selma to Montgomery is given a prominent place among the artifacts and documents of Alabama history.

Civil Rights Memorial (at the Southern Poverty Law Center) is a moving tribute in water and stone to those slain in the civil rights movement from 1955 to 1968.

Rosa Parks Library and Museum The courageous act of civil disobedience by Rosa Parks that led to the 1955–56 Montgomery Bus Boycott is powerfully documented.

H. Councill Trenholm State Technical College The library's collections include documents, images, and oral histories of the march and the voting rights movement.

About Your Visit

To retrace the marchers' steps, start at Brown Chapel in Selma and follow signs to U.S. 80. Take U.S. 80 to Montgomery; follow signs to the Alabama State Capitol.

For Your Safety

Wear comfortable walking shoes. Watch for snakes, poison ivy, and fire ants. During hot weather drink plenty of water.

More Information

Selma to Montgomery
National Historic Trail
7002 U.S. 80 West
Hayneville, AL 36040
334-877-1984
www.nps.gov/semo

In 1996 Congress established Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail. For more information on the National Park Service, visit www.nps.gov.

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The Viola Liuzzo Memorial is near the place where she was shot.

Viola Liuzzo
COURTESY PENNY LIUZZO HERRINGTON

©CHARLES MOORE/BLACK STAR

Feeding marchers after a long day on the road.

©CORBIS

The "Stars for Freedom" rally at City of Saint Jude, March 24.

*At the **Lowndes County Line** U.S. 80 narrowed from four lanes to two. The court order allowing the march stipulated that only 300 marchers could walk this part of the road, both to keep one lane open for traffic and because the narrow, rural road through the county would be the most dangerous part of the march. Three hundred people would be much easier to guard than 4,000.*

__Tent City__ White landowners in Lowndes County, retaliating against tenant farmers who registered, voted, or engaged in any voting rights activities, threw them off their land. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Lowndes County leaders worked to help families stay together and remain in the county. They bought tents, cots, heaters, food, and water and helped several families build a temporary "tent city." Despite harassment—including shots regularly fired into the encampment—residents persevered for nearly two years as organizers helped them find new jobs and look for permanent housing.

__City of Saint Jude__, a Catholic institution with a hospital, school, and church, was the last campsite for the marchers and the site of a musical rally the night before the final leg of the march into Montgomery.

Montgomery Historic Trail

Montgomery
See detail map at right

Campsite 4
City of Saint Jude
March 24

H. Councill Trenholm State Technical College Archives

White Hall

Lowndes Interpretive Center
Site of Tent City

Mount Gilliard Missionary Baptist Church

Campsite 2
Rosie Steele Farm
March 22

Campsite 3
Robert Gardner Farm
March 23

Viola Liuzzo Memorial

Wright Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church

*On the road to Montgomery after carrying marchers back to Selma, **Viola Liuzzo** was shot and killed by Klansmen. Her memorial, near the place where she was shot, overlooks the route of the march.*

*__Hayneville__ In August 1965 seminarian **Jonathan Daniels** was jailed for joining boycotts of segregated facilities. Soon after his release he was shot and killed in a confrontation with a storeowner.*

Hayneville

Old Lowndes County Jail

Lowndes County Courthouse

Jonathan Daniels Memorial

LOWNDES

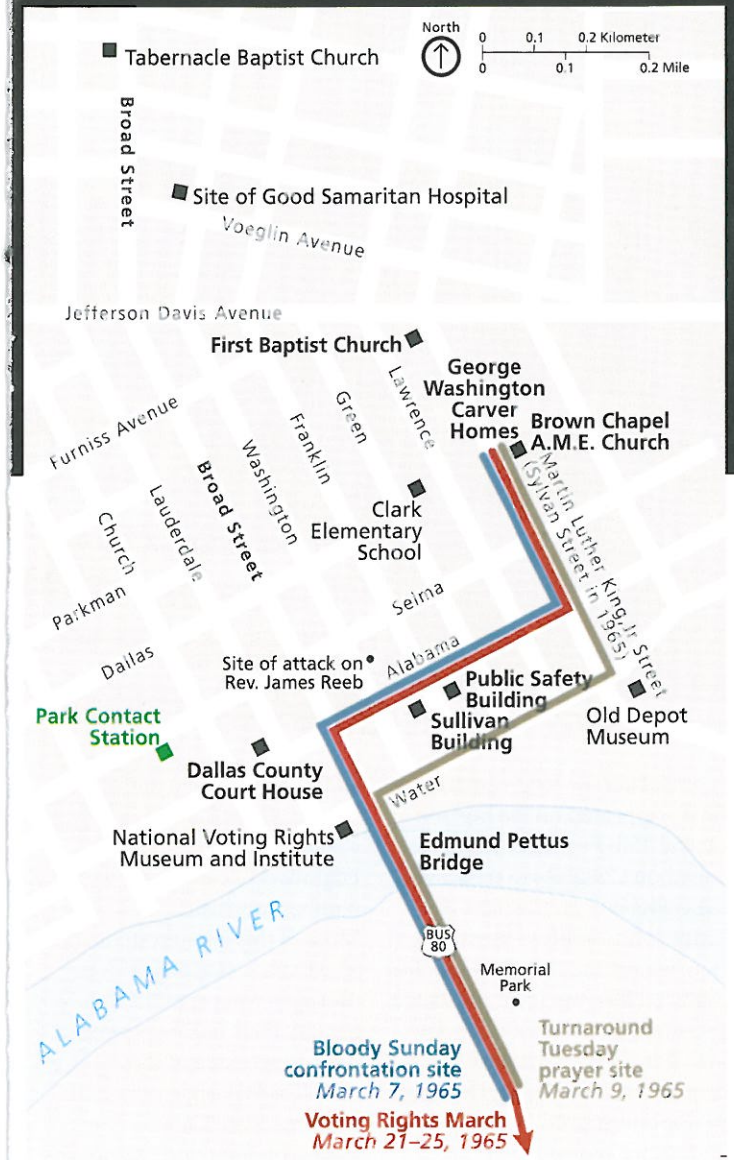
MONTGOMERY

North

0 1 2 3 4 5 Kilometers

0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

Selma



On the first attempt and on the final march, marchers took the same route from Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church and over the Edmund Pettus Bridge *(blue and red lines)*. The red line here and on the large map indicates the final route along U.S. 80. The second attempt followed a slightly different route *(brown line)*.

March 7, 1965
Bloody Sunday

March 9, 1965
Turnaround Tuesday

March 21–25, 1965
Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March

Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail

Zion's Chapel Methodist Church
Jimmie Lee Jackson Memorial
Perry County Courthouse
Marion

Marion *In February 1965 state troopers attacked marchers as they left the courthouse at night. When Jimmie Lee Jackson and his family fled to a restaurant, troopers followed them and struck his grandfather. As Jackson moved to defend him, a trooper shot Jackson at close range. He died a few days later. Jackson's memorial is at Zion's Chapel Methodist Church.*

PERRY

Cahaba River

DALLAS

Selma
See detail map at left

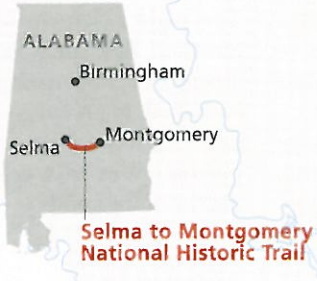
Alabama

Selma to National

Campsite 1
David Hall Farm
March 21

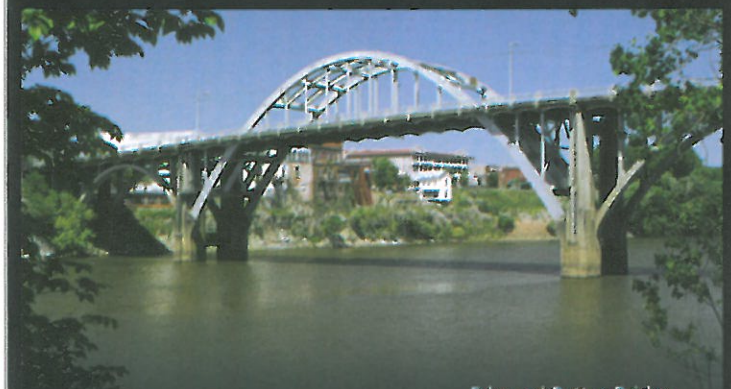
Dallas County/Lov

Much of U.S. 80, the route of the march, was a quiet country road in 1965.

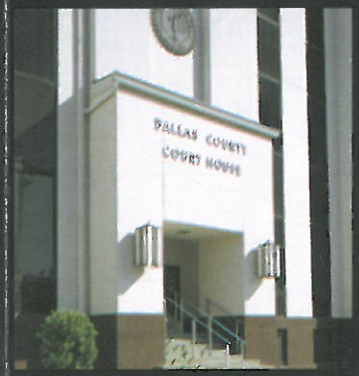


Campsites *The marchers spent five days and four nights on the road, camping on farms owned by people friendly to the movement. Organizers had to provide tents, enough hot food to feed 300 people three meals a day, and sanitary facilities. Doctors tended blisters and sprained ankles. Despite the logistical challenges, the marchers' spirits remained high as they eased their journey with song.*

Following the Trail

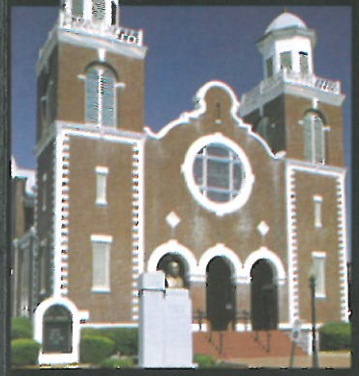


Edmund Pettus Bridge

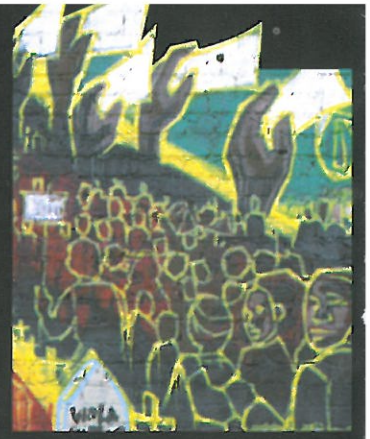


Dramatic confrontations during the voting rights campaign took place at the Dallas County Court House.

The First Baptist Church supported the Selma voting rights campaign before it became national news.



Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church became the command post and spiritual heart of the local voting rights movement.



A mural *(detail above)* near where Rev. James Reeb was attacked portrays a people's trials and hopes for the future.

Courage, hate, triumph, fear, hope—

powerful emotions are evoked by the sites related to the 1965 voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery. For those who had a role in the events, memories haunt these places. For others the experience is indirect but also deeply felt.

Because photographs and film of the events played so crucial a role in the struggle, these images and today's historic sites enrich each other: The streets and buildings, many virtually unchanged, help us engage more deeply with recorded scenes from four decades ago. At the same time the old images make the sites resonate with the passions of a stormy era. Standing before them is like watching an old newsreel, our imagination calling up the cries and confusion from that terrible, noble time.

Some of the sites inspire, as they summon again the idealism and purpose that drove the voting rights movement. Others make us uncomfortable—commemorating the death of an innocent, marking a place where people suffered bigotry and brutality—but this is why they are so important. These places will not let us forget.

Selma: Echoes of the Struggle

Selma remains a small, quiet town. In a day you can walk to the major sites connected with the voting rights drive. We suggest you start with the **Park Contact Station** at 816 Selma Ave. Park interpreters can answer questions and provide historical context for the story. You'll also find more literature there.

"Bloody Sunday" Confrontation Site Here Alabama state troopers and the county sheriff's posse halted, then attacked, marchers on March 7, 1965.

Brown Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church This was the site of early mass meetings in the 1960s voting rights campaign. It was also the staging point for registration marches to the county courthouse and for the final march to Montgomery.

Cecil C. Jackson Public Safety Building This building served as the Selma City Hall and as the jail for both Selma and Dallas County in 1965. When Martin Luther King, Jr., and a number of marchers were arrested in February, many were incarcerated here.

Dallas County Court House This was the destination for most voting rights marches in Selma. Those trying to register here were confronted with bureaucratic obstacles or roughly removed from the premises.

Edmund Pettus Bridge This bridge over the Alabama River became symbolic of the first attempts to march from Selma to Montgomery. On March 7—"Bloody Sunday"—marchers crossed the bridge as they left Selma; on the other side they were beaten back by state troopers blocking U.S. 80.

First Baptist Church This church took the early lead in the voting rights struggle in Selma and Dallas County. Members allowed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee to use the church as its first organizational base and rallying point when it arrived in Selma in 1963.

George Washington Carver Homes Many participants in the Selma marches lived in this large housing complex. Marchers and civil rights workers from out of town were lodged here.

Sullivan Building The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference directed their local voting rights activities from this building.

To make the most of your time:
If you have half a day: Take the Martin Luther King, Jr. Street Historic Walking Tour (Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church, First Baptist Church, Carver Homes) and see the Dallas County Court House and the Bloody Sunday confrontation site.

If you have two hours: Take the Martin Luther King, Jr. Street Historic Walking Tour and see the Bloody Sunday confrontation site.

Related Sites

Clark Elementary School Teachers from this school marched to the county courthouse and attempted to register, inspiring others who had been reluctant to join the campaign.

National Voting Rights Museum and Institute Documents, artifacts, and videos trace the voting rights struggle and commemorate those who took part.

Site of Good Samaritan Hospital The primary hospital for African Americans during segregation and where most injured marchers were taken.

Tabernacle Baptist Church Site of the first mass meeting on voting rights in Selma, 1964.